

Planning and Neighborhoods Committee Meeting Transcript – 10/19/2015

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>> Good afternoon, everyone. I'm Greg Casar. And this is the planning and neighborhoods committee. It is October 19 at 4:17 P.M. We're in council chambers. I'm joined by all the members of the committee and councilmember Houston. Thank you for joining us. The first item on the agenda is approving the minutes for the September meeting. Is there a motion to approve those minutes? Moved by councilmember Gallo. Am I allowed to second things as a chair. >> Sure. >> Casar: I will second it then. All in favor of moving the minutes. Say aye. It is approved unanimously. Second is citizen communication where we will take speakers on items not on the agenda. Today we have Stewart Hirsch. Good afternoon. >> Thank you, chair and members of the committee. My name is student Harry Hirsch. Like most in Austin, I rent. It has been 107 years since Chicago won a world series. I am not from Chicago, but I feel for them. It has been more than 107 months since we instituted one day of affordable housing at Rainey Street and we still can't get a hearing on the police commission nor an agenda item posted on this committee or the housing committee. I hope the Cubs will win before you all get around to it. But I'm not sure that's the case. And every month that goes by, when someone remodels an existing building over in Rainey and uses it for a bar or an office or an unaffordable housing element or build or tears down what exists or takes a vacant lot and builds

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without an affordable housing element for one day of affordability means that that land is never going to be affordable for the very longest -- those kind of investments will not result in affordability for a very long period of time. So I'm here, once again, as I have been on several other occasions, asking you to finally take up the issue of Rainey Street. Asking you to consider as part of that deliberation, whether the option of perhaps payment of a fee in lieu into one of the nearby homestead preservation districts might be a good match for how we could gain dollars to mitigate the gentrification that is occurring throughout the urban core, particularly the urban core east of I-35. And every month that you post other things on the item and you don't post Rainey, we -- some of us will continue to appear, like old testament prophet, reminding you what you're not doing and what is right. Because what is legal isn't necessarily what is fair. And that's what's going on, on Rainey Street and it has been going on since your predecessors created the additional entitlements over there that result in no more than one day of housing affordability. So thank you for hopefully considering this in some point in the distant future and the Cubs win. >> Casar: Thank you. The next item on our agenda is discussion and possible action on the ordinance related to nonpeak hour concrete installation. Otherwise known as downtown concrete pouring issue. To frame this, briefly, before I call up speakers, I believe that we referred this back to

committee when the last staff recommendation came over. And we hadn't received very much times. I think staff presented the

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recommendation here at committee, but we feel ready to vote on it since then. Staff is crafting I think an updated recommendation. So we don't have that staff recommendation today. So I don't think that there is much for us to vote on. I will just say that it would be helpful to make sure that we have the recommendation that we -- at least a couple of weeks before any committee meeting where we recommend it and that we have a recommendation. You know, I wouldn't want to rush it, but just at some point soon, because we have been under this interim ordinance since we got on council. Voting regularly to extend the ordinance. With that said, I will call up speaker, because it was posted. Although, frankly, it likely shouldn't have been posted with public comment because we have already taken a long public hearing on it. And I think it would be helpful for us to reopen public testimony when we have a final -- when we have a staff recommendation. Because it was posted somewhat ambiguously. I would err on the side of letting speakers talk since there are only four. >> David king. >> Chair, I know when an item was going to be postponed, the chair gave the option of speaking now or waiting until it came back up on the agenda. I don't know whether you want to consider that or not. >> Casar: That's a useful suggestion. Mr. King? >> Chair, I just have one really brief question, really. And that is about -- it says it applies to p-public. And I'm not sure how extensive that is, that would apply to the city. Is there some way to get information on what other areas that would apply to. That is downtown district.

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P is? That is all. >> Casar: That is helpful. I will make sure to talk about that and considering we were talking about the central district. We'll make sure to ask that question when staff brings their item. Rebecca moss. >> In combination with other stakeholders, including the downtown alliance, real estate Austin, and Austin contractors of America, we have been offering proposed language to create a permanent solution to this problem since may of this year. While it is not possible to create a solution to make everyone happy, we have proposed language we feel creates a balanced solution. The impacts of continuing to use the temporary ordinance without a permanent solution are already being felt with increases in project costs, increase in downtown daytime congestion and project delayed. We ask that we would like to continue to be included in the development of language that created a balanced 9999, but make sure we have enough notice to provide meaningful comment and feedback. >> Casar: Thank you. >> Thanks. >> Casar: Paul turner? I think you were signed up on 3 and 4. If you can help us with downtown concrete and pouring and solve this, that would be great. >> [Indiscernible]. >> Casar: And Kurt Shaw. Ok. Great. If that's the speakers that we have, I will just suggest that this -- now that we're on record that I hope that staff will bring us something, promptly working together with the various stakeholders who have been working on this so long and to make sure that that recommendation gets to

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this committee's inbox at least a couple of weeks before any hearing so we can hear how it went with the stakeholders and have grounding on a vote. Mayor pro tem. >> Kitchen: -- >> Tovo: Thank you, chair. I have a quick question. I understand he's been the most involved with the concrete pouring, it is my understanding there is one more stakeholder meeting before the recommendations come to council or to this meeting? >> In my conversations with Greg, that is what he told me. >> Tovo: Do you have a

sense of when that will take place? >> I can find out tomorrow. >> Tovo: For those participating, I'm sure they'll be informed. Thanks. >> Casar: Our last item of the day was referred to us by the mayor's office. It is discussion and potential initiation of code amendments relating to development and regulations for public schools including repeal or amendment of codes for public schools. This generally has to deal with sections of the code that exempt public schools from certain land development regulations. We have interlocal agreements with our I.S.D.S, however our public charters aren't subject to the interlocal agreements. I can probably get more framing from this issue -- about this issue from staff. My understanding is it has been addressed by the police commission and they have code amendments relating to this. I will take testimony and then allow the committee members to ask the people present here questions. So first is Mr. King.

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>> Thank you, chair, co-chair, members of the committee. My name is David King. And now I'm speaking as representative of the Austin neighborhood's council. You may have received a copy of the ANC resolution passed regarding this issue. It was passed July 22, 2015. And so really, I'll cut to the chase. I believe that you probably realize this is a situation that probably none of us really want to have happen to our neighborhoods where a public charter school can come in and build without regard to the same kind of compatibility standards and setbacks, height, things like that, that would apply to other types of development in our neighbors. So I'm glad that this is before you and that you will help us solve this problem. And so that's really what ANC resolution calls for, is for the council to look at this and help us solve this problem. And essentially, require public charter schools to follow the same kind of guidelines - development guidelines that apply to Austin I.S.D. That is pretty straightforward there. And it's, to me, it is a matter of fairness and equity that these schools have the same rules that apply to AISD and neighborhoods can have some understanding of, you know, what kind of development can occur in their neighborhoods and how it might impact them. And that they understand what the rules are. So I hope that you will move forward in, you know, as quickly as possible in getting these changes in effect so that going forward, neighborhoods can have some protections against the types of development that you have already heard about one particular one. That really is a big problem. It's gonna be there for the long-term. These neighbors will live with this problem for decades to come. I think this is a really important issue, and I appreciate you taking a look at it and helping us solve the problem as quickly as

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possible. Thank you. >> Casar: Thank you. I also failed to mention as part of the referral, that apart from some of the issues I mentioned and reiterated by Mr. King, that in the event a facility ceases to operate as a school, it is unclear what might be its future uses. I think that is something we will discuss with the issues identified by Mr. King. Ms. Moffat, you have three minutes. >> Hi, I'm Susan Moffat, for those that I don't know as well. I'm a parent of an AISD graduate and I served on the master plan, task force, the aid committee on neighborhoods and schools, the joint subcommittee, school and family work, charter revision committee, boards of several education nonprofits and I was appointed and confirmed by council to serve as the joint committees subcommittee on the code next advisory group and I worked at the legislature for eight years as a researcher. I'm speaking as an individual. I want to give you the background I'm interpreting to this issue. The Texas education code 1203 states quote an open enrollment charter school is subject to federal and state laws and rules governing public schools and municipal zoning ordinances governing public schools, unquote. The intent of state law is quite clear that public schools and open enrollment charter schools should be treated equally when it comes to zoning and land development. The problem here in Austin is the zoning regs for public schools are

governed by separate interlocal land development agreements. And our public enrollment charter schools are governed by basically nothing due to an old provision still in the books in nrlc this inexplicable's exempts public schools. Our public schools are at a disadvantage, which is not the intent of state law, nor would

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that ever have been city council's intent to establish an unequal playing field for our public school districts. Unfortunately, city legal as I understand it said the city cannot enter into an interlocal agreement with the charter school because the state has not designated charters for interlocal entities. They're designated for other purposes. For all of these reasons I strongly encourage to you repeal the section that exempts the code. And replace it with all public schools, except for specifically modified or exempted by an approved interlocal agreement and that would state pursuant to state law that an open enrollment charter school would be equally subject to all the same provisions as an approved interlocal land development agreement for whichever ISD in whose boundaries that charter school intended to build. So that's my story. I'm sticking to it. Thank you for your time. [Applause] >> Casar: Thank you. Scooter Cheatam. Followed by Matthew Abbott. >> How much time? >> Casar: Three minutes, sir. >> Just going to talk about a particular project. Not charter schools. I don't think I'll need three minutes. I'm one of the people that lives near the project in question. It's a project that's been under discussion for three years. Trying to figure out how this loophole could happen that would, Lou the schools to be built so close to the houses.

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It's a project that's too big, too close to residences and there are too many students planned to put on four acres. The traffic dumps into the neighborhood into a small zigzag on a neighborhood street. And I don't think any of you would want that to happen next to you. So I would encourage you to take a look at the photographs and that's really the germ of the idea behind the amendments that are being asked for. And that particular code, section 25-2-8-33 allows a waiver of all site plan review and compatibility standards. And section 25-5-2-f allows a waiver of contacting surrounding property owners so anybody can have anything to say about it. There is no process whatsoever in how this project produced. It just popped up. I don't think we want that in our code. So I encourage you to move this along and thank every one of you so much for listening. That's all I have. >> Casar: Mr. Cheatam. Mr. Cheatam, I have a quick question for you. You and I discussed briefly the planning commission initiated. >> Little louder? >> Casar: You and I dismissed the planning commission has addressed some of the issues and ensure parity the best I can, for all the of forms of public schools. Do you think the code amendment as initiated by planning commission could achieve those goals? >> It could chief those -- could achieve those goals, but there is a plan for a mirror building, but we would like to

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see the code fixed before that happens. Right now, someone can pull a permit for that building or any site in Austin and follow the same guidelines. Or not follow the guidelines. >> Casar: Thank you. >> Any other questions? Thank you. >> Casar: Mr. [Indiscernible] And Mr. Shaw I see you circled no on wishes to speak. I got so excited to call you up, I apologize. That's everybody we have signed up. I would actually -- Mr. Abbott, I called your name and I apologize I didn't remember to call you again. Mr. Abbott, ozzy Abbott, please. >> Chairman and committee, thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to speak on behalf of charter schools in central Texas. My name is Matthew Abbott, I'm the executive director of

wayside schools. We serve students in grades pre-k 3 through 12. We have one elementary school and one secondary school. Today, I'm speaking on behalf of a group of public charter schools that serve 10,000 students about considerations to make potential changes to land development rules for public schools. First, just a quick review of a few things. Charter schools are public schools and receive public funding like aid except that we do not receive money for facilities and cannot levy taxes because we're not an extension of the government. In addition the charter schools serving central Texas mostly serve minority students from lower income families. Most public charter schools are located in urban infill sites which are severely constrained. They do not have large campuses with football fields or large recreational spaces.

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Just like aid, charter schools need the land process doing economical and expeditious. Unlike a commercial project if we delay the opening of a school, a school has to open -- unlike a commercial project, which can delay its opening a school can delay its opening or otherwise literally students are put out. We would appreciate the chairman and the committee allowing additional time to research this important issue and will look forward to being part of the conversation with city staff as it develops. Just to give you an idea about us, we've now done three significant construction processes. And every single process we've ever had, we've always faced the risk of not opening on time. So we're thinking about all the impacts that would have on the families we serve and all the efforts we put into making sure we open up in a timely manner to serve our families that that be considered as we go forward in this process. I appreciate this opportunity to speak with you all on behalf of the charter schools in south Texas. >> Casar: Mayor pro tem. >> Tovo: I appreciate your point about how important it is that schools open on time. I would think our ISD and other school districts face the same situation. I appreciate your willingness to be involved in the process as it goes through the planning commission, but were you suggesting that think the rules should be different for charter schools? >> I'm not suggesting that. I'm suggesting whatever we come up with make sense for the purpose of opening up schools in a timely manner. That benefits all public schools in central Texas. >> Tovo: Ok. Sure. I agree. Ok. >> Staff might be able to answer this. Don't we have an expedited process available for the school districts? It seems like I've heard that, that conversation as we've talked about different building projects with aid.

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>> Jerry [indiscernible] From planning and zoning. There is not a specific area of the code that says they get expedited. Sometimes we know they have a time crunch with the school opening, sometimes we try to meet the deadlines because they're important. There is not a revision that gives them an expedited review. We have the interlocal agreements to serve as a land development code, if you will, for the school district. Is it a unique review that we're using a different set of rules than in the standard code. The time lines are the same although we do our best. >> Does the inter local agreement allow more of an expedited review as part of that agreement? You look at situations with, you know, new construction may be different, but construction that needs to happen during the summer since kids are not in school. I'm curious how we help facilitate making that process happen in a timely manner, and if we can make sure that carries forward if we have separate things that happen for the charter schools. >> I will check, but to my knowledge, we don't have anything about the interlocal periods. We work with all the districts especially aid because with the bond schedules, Summers, things like that, they often have a totally different set of deadlines to meet. Thus far, I think we have worked with them on that. >> You have. I appreciate that, I think that is appreciated. I think we want to make sure that in what we're discussing with charter schools that we also have that same ability to move that process forward in a timely

manner so that it's working within school schedules. >> The issues the same for both types of school. >> Casar: Mr. Rest haven, unless there are other questions. Councilmember Houston?

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>> Houston: A couple of thing, thank you for letting me sit in. Ms. Moffat, could you send that to us for the citations? And the other thing is about consistency in how school properties are zoned, could you describe that process? What are our schools zoned now or are they not zoned? >>, Well regard to zoning generally speak without going through every category. Generally speaking there is a lot aligned to where a school may site itself. It is not uncommon to see a single-family subdivision with an elementary school inside zoned as a three. It does allow for schools in single-family zoning. It allows them in a lot of categories. >> Houston: Has there ever been any conversation about a public school zoning? If the code stays the way it is, once that property is purchased by a school district or charter school to go through a zoning change to make it public school zoning? >> There is no specific category. >> Houston: We'd have to make that up? >> Yes. >> Houston: Is that possible? >> That is a possibility. The other category besides single-family where it happens a lot right now. Another possibly is the P zoning, public zoning. It is allowed in P and in a lot of others. One possibility would be to restrict. The others where they are allowed. You know you could use some already-existing categories without having to make up a new one. It is a matter of simply adjusting the table. >> Houston: One last question. May I call up aisd folks. >> Casar: Absolutely.

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Can I ask Mr. Rustoven while he's up here. It is our understanding there are already planning amendments initiated, what were initiated? >> Sure. There was a code amendment and the full planning commission passed that amendment. Is open-ended as far as what the direction is. The specific language that was passed was to initiate an amendment to title 25 to have change in authority. Couldn't be more open-ended than that. That amendment is currently under staff review. It will need to go back to the planning commission and then back to the full council. >> Casar: Great. Before we ask aisd those questions, just a comment on that point. My understanding is that to achieve some level of parity between different kinds of public schools on land use, that that is sort of -- my understanding of the intent of the planning commission, that would be my intend and desire we can, if it is true we can't sign interlocal agreements with specifically nongovernmental entities. So it sounds to me like there isn't -- if our intention is to initiate code amendments to this section, that planning commission has done so and it is just up to council to shepherd those in and wait until the plan amendments come back. >> We are working on this very issue because of this administration. In our opinion, it is not a need to initiate a separate parallel amendment, it would be identical. We understand this issue about bringing it forward. >> Casar: Councilmember Houston? Mayor pro tem? >> Tovo: [Indiscernible]. >> Houston: Uh-huh. >> Tovo: What is the time line

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on how soon they will return to the planning commission. >> There are tricky legal issues with regard to this. I don't have a date just yet. >> Tovo: Maybe we can talk about this when we decide what our action will be. I regard this as something time sensitive and we should move forward as quickly as possible on. I guess at some point during the meeting, I would be interested in either you or our city attorney responding to Ms. Moffat's suggestion of how this could potentially be achieved. >> Casar: Let's go with councilmember Houston's questions to aisd. Then we'll go back. >> Houston: I appreciate that. There has

been some conversation about school closures. I would like to hear from the district about if that were to happen, how would the uses of that change from being a school to being something else? And what might that "Something else" be? And have they made plans for that, and how they would use that space. >> Casar: Mr. Charro, you didn't sign you up to speak. But councilmember Houston can sign you up, if she so chooses, so ... >> You could have given me a little bit easier question there. But ... Um, the district is actually about to initiate a new committee that is going to be looking at a lot of these issues, but I don't think at this point, Ms. Houston, I can really tell you whether or not there is any particular decision that has been made. It's a complicated issue, as you know, and it's one of those things that we clearly

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have some issues about underenrollment. We have been trying to work on that on kind of a school-by-school basis to work with individual communities to try to engage them in the discussions and that kind of thing. Whether or not we will get to a solution that is more global is something I think that -- that might be a hope. But at this point, I don't know that we really can say one way or the other about, you know, what that process will look like. I think there are going to be discussions around a variety of different approaches. But it's really going to be something that is going to play itself out through the process. And we haven't really begun the process yet. So I don't know that I can really be very helpful and give a response at this point. >> Houston: Thank you. My concern councilmembers, the concerns I hear in the community revolve around if a school closes. Then the property is perhaps sold and flipped and then you have some other kind of use on there, because we don't know how many are zoned single-family or how many in commercial areas. We don't have information to what the current zoning of the land is that the school sits on. It is concerned that the school will go out of business and all of a sudden something else there, and no way to mitigate that impact on the neighborhoods. They want some level of understanding about what is possible and if it is P for public, they understand that that would be a public use. But if it becomes something else based on what the current land development code says they're sitting into.

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They don't have anything to think about or mitigate at this point. They want that to be included in the conversations. One of the things to find out is what are the current land development codes that schools are sitting on? Both public and public charters, so we know what that looks like citywide. >> Casar: Any further questions for Mr. Turner or anyone else? Mayor pro tem? >> Tovo: I will express that while we're on this really difficult subject of school closures and possible school closures and discussions about them, when this has arisen in the past, as a potential outcome, I know the city has stepped forward and said, you know, we would love the opportunity to work with you to prevent the school closures, if possible and figure out other uses for the facility that would serve the communities. I hope as that committee gets going, that we'll be able to work in close partnership about what the best outcomes are for the communities surrounding those schools. >> Casar: And now, Mr. Lloyd, I believe the mayor pro tem had a question for you. And just briefly, before she asks, could you frame the issue legally for us, what state law requires of us regarding land use for public schools and then also the interlocal question. >> Sure. Brent Lloyd, assistant city attorney. Essentially, I think Ms. Moffat stated it correctly, that section 212-103 of the education code essentially says that open enrollment charter schools are treated as public schools are treated -- public charter schools are treated as public schools for municipal elections. We have a code section and I don't know the origins of it that essentially exempts

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public schools and therefore charter schools as well from impervious cover standards with the exception of the areas that are affected by save our springs, cut and fill requirements, landscaping, compatibility standards, subdivision and also traffic impact analyses. Now as a practical matter, public schools can't really avail themselves of all those exemptions because we have las, interlocal agreements with them that actually include some regulations, not the same as the land development regulations but they're land developments that get at a lot of these different requirements. We don't have las with charter schools and at this time, we're happy to continue looking into that, we don't -- we would not recommend attempting to do that. We generally -- you know, we don't do contract zoning, and we try to -- if we're going to enter into some interdevelopment agreement we will look into statutory permission to do that. We have it for public school districts, we have that in the intergovernment code to enter into interlocal agreements for school districts. We don't have anything like that for charter schools. So ineffect, then, the planning commission initiation, which I was unaware of when I spoke with you earlier about this, would empower staff to draft an ordinance that would attempt to create parity in terms of land use regulation between charter schools and public school districts. There are different ways that that could be done, and I think that, you know, here are the las, and I probably -- several comments that were made, I think council would rather not see the size of the land development code expand by this much. So I think there are ways that

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we could incorporate by reference into the ordinance we present to you certain provisions from the aid interlocal so we don't have to set it all out in full. But we'll have to work on that. With staff, we're definitely available to do that. >> Casar: Thank you. Are there any other questions for Mr. Lloyd? Thank you. Is there further discussion? Councilmember? >> Houston: I just want to ask staff, is that a possibility to be able to identify what the current zoning for the public schools and the charter schools? So that we know if we're dealing with sf 1, sf 3, industrial, mixed use? We just need to know what they're currently sitting on. >> Sure councilmember. Public education facility is an allowed in every category, upto industrial park, major and light industrial. Everything below that, which is just about everything, it's a permitted use. >> Houston: I think that is part of the problem. We need to narrow the scope of that. >> Casar: Mayor pro tem, did you have a question? >> Tovo: I wanted to make a motion. Is now a good time? >> Casar: As good a time as any. >> Tovo: Is sounds like the planning commission is moving forward, but it I would propose that we pass a recommendation expressing our interest that the code amendments ensure that charter schools follow the similar land development standards as public school districts that we end up with an end result that honors our existing agreements to aid whether those are expressed in code or

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interlocal, the combination of two, and that the code amendments also ensure that charter schools are built compatible with the areas in which they're believe -- I should say in which they're located. >> Casar: Mayor pro tem makes a motion. Is there a second? I will second that. Is there discussion? Do you want to lay out anything else? >> Tovo: I think our speakers have all really contributed to the dialogue. I believe that we are fortunate to have some great schools here in Austin and I believe that we should hold all of the schools to the same provisions, when it comes to constructing. And to make sure that we're doing everything we can to ensure our structures that are built within neighborhoods are compatible with the surrounding community. >> Casar: Mayor pro tem, do you suggest that this needs

to be a recommendation since going to council for affirmation or would that be just the affirmation of this committee? >> Tovo: I guess you're asking whether this recommendation should go to council for a discussion there at this point? >> Casar: Exactly. Considering that the process -- considering this is sort of in the process at planning commission and in my view, I thought initiating this sort of broad code amendment that would ensure some level of parity would be today. Considering that planning commission has kicked off this work, I don't know if we need to have all of council weigh-in on it or if it is sufficient for us to state our position with this vote and then make sure that all the interested parties are working through that code amendment process themselves? >> Tovo: Yeah -- >> . >> Tovo: My real interest is in making sure the code amendments make their way to council as soon as possible for the reasons Mr. Cheatham

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mentioned earlier. I think there are other situations and better for all parties if we don't have a situation -- if there is clarity to the situation. So I would -- I would be fine with that recommendation staying at the committee level and just joining up with the code amendments on their way to council, if that's the will of the group. >> Casar: I think that's that's appropriate and I would encourage everyone to be as engaged as possible in this code amendment process that planning commission has initiated. Once we got this on our agenda, it looks like they were two steps ahead of us. I would recommend that y'all checkout that process, but now I think staff and the public knows this committee is interested. And that those that sort of vote for this motion have similar goals in mind in making sure that our neighborhood residents are respected but also some level of parity and that we're following state law. >> Tovo: And I add with speed. >> Renteria: And I agree. >> Casar: Any further discussion? >> Houston: I would like to see a map of where the charter schools are located and public schools are located. I think it would be insightful to see which land is being used and where they're being placed. >> Casar: Mr. Rustoven I trust you can follow-up with councilmember Houston with that information and get back to us. >> [Indiscernible]. >> Casar: And he's on video, too. [Chuckling] Any further discussion? All those in favor of the motion, raise your hand. Passes unanimously. Great, so further discussion on this item or do you want to talk about future items which is the last item? The last item of the day is talk about future items for the committee.

[5:00:09 PM]

>> Tovo: This is for staff. The item that is with the amnesty item, speed is the word of the day, I guess. I think that's important that that come back to us. I know that it was initiated by planning commission, it was recommended by planning commission. It has yet to make it to council. I understand why, but it is of real concern when we have houses -- there is a loophole. The amnesty was intended to provide an opportunity for owners of very small tracts of substandard tracts to build structures. And they are being -- what is happening on some of these lots is that existing houses are being demolished, and multiple houses being built. And that is not the right course of things from an affordability perspective. I just learned today that a house was demolished on the 2700 block of east 4th. An older, more affordable structure. And now there are two proposed single-family structures. We're hearing of others, where a house that bridges a couple substandard lots are being demolished to make way for short-term rentals. It's important that this be closed, staff, do you have a sense of what that might come to pass? >> I do not yet. We're working on an issue between three different cities departments that we need to solve, because the code requires that we do that. So, planning and zoning, we're doing our best to kick it out. >> Tovo: I appreciate that. It was initiated in 2014. It's been in process a long time. I hope that can proceed on. Thanks for your work. >> Casar: Any other future agenda items? >> Renteria: Mayor pro

tem, on these, you know, small-lot amnesty programs, we're noticing a lot that -- the way that the developers are getting around,

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dealing with the city, is that they set their property. And in some state -- to not even have to give -- they don't have to subdivide their lot. They can just sell, just a certain amount -- just five foot of the house, and they can sell it off -- the front house off and then develop the back part. That's what's happening all over east Austin, where they don't have to go out and subdivide. I'd like to find out more information about how that actually works out. >> Tovo: Yeah. That's a concern. >> Casar: Councilmember Gallo. >> Gallo: You know, and I think that certainly, as we talk about affordability and the ability to address affordability with both size and density, that there is a value for the small lots, and that this, hopefully, will be part of that discussion instead of a separate. Separate. And I know that we are on a fast speed for everything, but I do think we need to take our time to have the discussion so it becomes a full discussion with all of the policy areas when we talk about affordability and how to address affordability. I understand we've got so many things on our plate that are important issues that we seem to be taking a really fast track on, and I just am concerned that we're not leaving ourselves time to really look at the big picture policy areas and come up with plans that address, once again, the affordability by using both small and dense -- particularly in the urban core. So, I'm just -- we're all in a rush to do a lot of different things, but staff, you've been great with the things we've packed on top of you. We need to continue to be sensitive with being thoughtful, and deliberate. And if we need to be a little bit slower in the process, do

[5:04:12 PM]

that. >> Mr. Chair, if I may, real quick, I have a couple corrections on things that were said earlier in the meeting. One, I've been texting with my boss Rick. The concrete pour issue that you asked about, his intention is to release the new staff recommendation this week. However, he did not have a stakeholder meeting scheduled. So, I think that his intention was to see what the reaction was to new recommendations he's going to put out, and see where we go from there. His intention was to come back to the committee. I guess we'll wait and see. Secondly, with regard, Mr. Hirsch brought up the affordability issue for the Ranney street district. This was an amendment to the previous council initiated that was passed, the affordability period is the same as for the other periods, four years and nine years. And finally, Mr. Hirsch alluded to the fact that the cubs might be in the world series this year. [Laughing] >> As a longtime southside resident of the city of Chicago, I can tell you, it won't happen for another 107 years. I just wanted to get that out there. >> Casar: Thank you. I was most concerned with that last one. Committee members, anything else? [Laughing] >> [Off mic]. >> Casar: And finally, speaking to the bigger picture issues, I do want to make sure that this committee is working as proactively on big issues as possible. And as we continue to consider how the committees can and should work, I do want to think about how we make sure that we're handling the issues that will impact us citywide, and impact the most people. Part of the idea of the committees is how can we get out of dealing, necessarily, with just the issues that are most pressing to our constituents and sort of think about issues that might be pressing planning-wise, citywide for years to come. And I'll keep musing about it. If you have ideas, let me know.

[5:06:14 PM]

I also think that it was important to see at council how -- while we did so much work every month after

month on adus, that some folks felt that they weren't able to be a part of this discussion and were surprised by what got brought back. Something to continue to think about on future items, how we communicate back to council the work that we're doing, if the council wants to refer things to committee so that they are ready to discuss those with full knowledge when it does go back to the full council. So, just -- sort of not specific items, but items about future items so that we can make sure that this committee is having the most impact possible. And we almost broke our record of 5:00, but not quite. I think it's 5:06 P.M. I think we've gotten out of here before 5:00 once before, but, I'm going to adjourn the meeting unless there's any objection. All right.